

and billionaires should pay the same percent of their income taxes as middle-class families. They call it class warfare; they call it a political stunt. But in reality it is neither of those things. The Paying a Fair Share Act is common sense—the principle that everyone has a right to earn as much money as they can in America, as long as they are contributing their fair share.

We must have a sincere discussion about the distribution of tax burdens in this country. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the Paying a Fair Share Act, because it addresses this issue head on.

New York is a large, diverse State full of very different people with very different views—a fact of which I am extremely proud. But all across the State people agree on the basic principle that a Tax Code which allows the most privileged of our society, people making tens and hundreds of millions of dollars a year, to pay less than 14 percent in taxes—significantly less than the average middle-class family—is broken.

With the introduction of the Paying a Fair Share Act, we now have before us legislation that can significantly reduce our debt and deficit without also breaking the backs of middle-class Americans. By ensuring that millionaires and billionaires pay at least 30 percent of their income in taxes—a rate similar to many average Americans—we can reinstitute tax fairness in this country, a principle that our Tax Code has sadly lacked since the Bush tax cuts ballooned our debt by cutting taxes for the ultra wealthy.

I invite my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take part in this conversation. I consider the Paying a Fair Share Act as the beginning of a conversation, not the end of it. As the co-chair of the Senate Philanthropy Caucus, I was pleased to see that my colleague from Rhode Island included language that ensures we continue to promote charitable giving and I would have liked to have seen a similar provision for State and local income taxes. Regardless, I know we will have the opportunity to build upon this proposal as it moves through consideration in the Senate and I look forward to working with my colleagues to improve it.

The issues of institutional unfairness in our Tax Code and our debt are not going away—not until we act. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can take the Paying a Fair Share Act as the beginning of a new chapter in the national debate, one that ends with a fairer Tax Code, deficit reduction, and a message to the American people that their government will not rest until we have created a stronger, more prosperous, and fairer American economy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE ARKANSAS LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND AND THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind and the AbilityOne program, two important partners in our efforts to help blind Americans and those with other severe disabilities find meaningful employment.

The AbilityOne Program, formerly Javits-Wagner-O'Day, helps more than 47,000 people who are blind or have other severe disabilities put their skills and talents to work. It is the largest source of employment for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities in the country.

There are more than 600 nonprofit agencies throughout the United States, including Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, who participate in AbilityOne. These agencies produce over \$2.3 billion in products and services purchased by the Federal Government.

Before entering public service, I practiced optometry in Rogers, AK. Assisting people with vision problems was more than a career for me, it was, and remains, a commitment. It led me to help establish a low vision program at the Arkansas School for the Blind in Little Rock and to offer my services as a volunteer optometrist at an area clinic that provides medical services to low-income families. I see a tremendous amount of passion and commitment in those who give their time and services to Arkansas Lighthouse to the Blind.

Having visited the Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, and seeing firsthand the folks who work there and the products they make, I could not be more proud of the work done by these men and women.

I applaud any organization that helps people who are blind or severely disabled find employment. The same job that a colleague or I might take for granted is a lifeline for those living with a disability. The products and services produced through Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind and other organizations across the country also prove that someone with a disability can lead a productive life and make major contributions within their community. They provide a valuable service and I offer my continued support for their efforts.●

TRIBUTE TO JEAN PACE

• Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, it is my great pleasure today to recognize an Arkansan and a dedicated public servant on her approaching 75th birthday. Jean Pace, the longtime mayor of Mammoth Spring, AR, will celebrate her birthday on February 11, 2012. Family and friends will gather to celebrate not only Jean's birthday but also her tireless public service that has spanned 37 years.

Prior to her time in public office, Jean was drawn to Mammoth Spring for a teaching job. Needless to say, she fell in love with the town and its people and still lives there today. She spent 15 years teaching in the school district and played a significant role in developing the school's gifted and talented program as well as the music and band programs. Jean's love of music extended beyond the classroom as she also taught hundreds of children and adults piano lessons in her free time.

Though Jean loved inspiring her students each day in the classroom, she ultimately decided to pursue a greater role in the community and ran for mayor. Jean has now served 22 years in the mayor's office, and the city and surrounding area have seen substantial improvements with her at the helm. Mayor Pace has a reputation for being relentless in her pursuit of grant monies and in her efforts to improve the quality of life for the residents of Mammoth Spring. Her time and efforts have paved the way for such things as a new fire truck for the fire department, funding for the Aquatic Conservation and Education Center at Mammoth Spring National Fish Hatchery, and various improvements at the State Park. Her tenure as mayor also saw Ozarka College open a new location in Mammoth Spring, which has provided additional educational opportunities to Mammoth Spring residents.

While her work on behalf of the city is how most people know Mayor Pace, I would be remiss not to mention possibly the toughest and most rewarding job Jean has held. That is the job of mother and grandmother to her wonderful family. Jean's family includes her kids, Suzanne Pace Kimes and George Spencer Pace; their spouses, Curt Kimes and Ellen Pace; and two grandkids, George Sheffield Pace and Dalton Christine Pace. I know they will all enjoy being together to celebrate Jean's 75th birthday next week.

Mr. President, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Jean a happy 75th birthday and thank her for her 37 years of public service to Mammoth Spring.●

REMEMBERING EVELYN LAUDER

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, late last year we lost Evelyn H. Lauder, a business leader, women's health advocate, refugee of nazism—and a friend.

Evelyn was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1936, the only daughter of Ernest and Mimi Hausner. Two years later, after Nazi troops invaded Austria, the Hausners fled to England, where Evelyn's mother was sent to an internment camp on the Isle of Man.

In 1940, after Mrs. Hausner's release, the family sailed to the United States. They settled in New York, where Evelyn attended public schools and Hunter College. She then married Leonard Lauder; had two sons, William and Gary; and for a while worked as a schoolteacher in New York.